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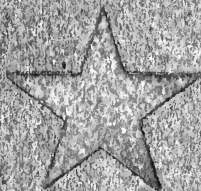
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1918

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Victory's Price







RAYMOND LAWRENCE NICHOLS
1899 1918.

Victory's Price

By
William Newton Nichols

Madison
1918

MS 3527
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1918

To my son,
RAYMOND LAWRENCE NICHOLS
Co. G, 127th Infantry, 32d Division,
American Expeditionary Forces,
who died for Liberty
August 3d, 1918, near Fismes, France,
at the victorious close of the
Second Battle of the Marne;
and to his comrades
"Les Terribles"
who lie in the shell-riven fields
of France.

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MAR 8 1919

NOV 27 1918

"They have not died in vain!"

THE MIDDEN-HEAP

(Sept.-1914.)

Tools of the Giver of Thought are we
 formed each to carve a line,
Base or noble as the great God wills
 to fit His plan divine;
Aught of the meaning shall we e'er
 know, aught grasp of His design,
Its pattern wrought with craftman's
 hand, set mete, and sacred sign.

Handfuls of dross-spoilt ore were we
 He gathered where it lay,
Buried since the Dawn beneath the
 earth and covered with foul
 debris;
By fire and fan He purged us, till,
 freed from the cumbering clay,
Tools well-tempered we wait till He
 needs our strength in His day.

Ever on high among the nations His
twin Colossi stand,
Fair Justice and Law, the great crea-
tions of His all-skilled hand;
Battered and bruised, o'er hill and
vale, scattered through every
land
Lie the bones of those who were His
tools, tombed but by the drift-
ing sand.

Battered and scattered by Memnon's
shrine lie the tools the carver
cast,
Used and broken but the midden-
heap may give them rest at last;
Yet the thought that flowed through
the chisel's point, all the strength
in the mallet massed,
Still endures, when as a God 'tis a
memory of the Past.

And the thought that swayed each
warrior's sword, all the lore the
scholar had,
The song that swept the lyre's
strings, made men be valorous,
joyous, sad,
The purpose we toil for, the sage's
dream,—even when all are
dead,—
Shall live while they give aid to men,
or sweeten the bitter bread.

ODIN'S CALL

(Aug.-1914.)

Ho! Arm ye quick my Heroes,
For Ragnarok is come!
Far borne o'er Niord's billows
Echoes the cannon's drum!

Lo! Now's the day,—the mighty
Day I dreamed of yore, when
Amid the Halls Immortal
I saw the Cause,—and End!

Valhalla's doors are open,
Valkyries sweep the plain,
To choose for Fame Eternal
My Heroes 'mid the slain!

Then fight ye well my Chosen,
Though Loki lead their host;
Nor fear ye Dwarf nor Giant,
Nor Kingship's unlaid ghost!

For out from all the turmoil,
The slaughter and the wrong,
I see emerge the Future,
A new Race,—a new Song!

A PALADIN OF FRANCE

(Aug.-1914.)

Above fair Brussels the white clouds
lie,
Like bales of snow-white wool they
float by,
Borne Rhine-ward by the cold wind
from the German Sea;
A thunder crash shakes the vaulted
blue,
A mist of men and iron downward
spew,
An eagle screams above the cloud in
battle glee;
"Garros for France!" peals the war-
rior cry,
As down the lanes of battle dash the
chariots of the sky!

THE DAWN OF WAR.

(Oct.-1914.)

Apart He rolls the grey-toned cur-
tain of the Elder World,—
The misty, fog-blown vail that Time
had wrought to hide the Past,—
And from out the vast Unknown, a
dire tempest whirled,
The myriads of the Slavs pour forth,
God's fierce, scourging blast:

Stagnant, vexed with old corruptions,
lay the king-ruled lands;
Priests and nobles, in vice and sloth-
ness, dyed their hands
In Man's blood; and of his wretched-
ness made sport;—
Then Lo!—amid the flames of battle
perish priest and court!

Beneath th' cannon's iron hail their
age-old cathedrals fall,
Their wooded parks are swept away,
their fortresses, aged, strong,
Their museums, their works of Art,
their stately church spires tall,
All have perished—for they were
builded on the quick-sands of
Man's wrong!

Note—The Prussian is not a true German,
but a Slav cursed with a veneer of Teutonic
Kultur.

THE GOD OF WAR.

(April-1915.)

O Galilee! the blood of men
In torrents pours on every field
Of all the lands that to Him yield
Worship,—who walked thy beaches
then:

Then, when thy storms obeyed His
will;
Then, when His voice bade them be
still;

Then, when He spake from the
fisher's boat,—
Pillowed His head on the fisher's
coat:

Now the kings cry for him to shed
Man's blood—He who for Man once
bled;
In His loved name cry woe and hate,
Leave the ravished to the wolves—
and Fate!

O Galilee! Once thou meant peace!
Once by thy marge we met a Friend,
Once with Him conversed at day's
end,
Once found with Him of earth sur-
cease;

Yet, if these who now chant His
name
'Neath Gothic spire or Russian dome,
Singing His praise for war's red
fame,
Praying within some ruined home,

Giving Him thanks who them has
blessed—
If these be His true priests,—ah, then
Ne'er was He the Friend whose
footsteps pressed
Thy marge;—nor His love Man's
desired end!

ATTILA.

(Sept.—1915.)

Great God of our fathers! Shall we
 endure
The scorn of the Goth? let him sleep
 secure
While the blood of our men, our
 women, our babes,
Red dyeing the seas slakes the lust
 he craves?

Aye craves! An Attila sits on his
 throne,
Who weighs not Man's life, loves the
 myriad groan
Of the wounded who line the tor-
 ture fields,
Who gives armed men Belgian babes
 for shields!

O God! Lift the cup full-brimmed
 to his lip!
May he live to see power from his
 fingers slip;
May he die the death Thou gavest to
 Cain,—
Or rot in a mad-house with crazed
 brain!

THE DREAM OF KAISERS TWO.

(Nov.-1915.)

Two Kaisers there were that
dreamed
That they should rule land and sea,
Two peoples there were they deemed
Bound fast to their axle-tree;—
Ah me! the woe of that dream!

Then first, from the high-borne
clouds,
Men rained Jove's fierce lightning
down;
Then first, from the vault of Night,
Fell fire on the sleeping town;
Then first men scanned the heavens,
Whence Christ in His glory rose,
In fear lest, 'mid moonbeams hid,
Darksome shapes, abhorrent, poise!

Lo! By day the planes are flitting,
Lo! by night the Zeppelins come;
And the cannon, mountain-splitting,
Drown the note of fife and drum;—
Ah me! the world harks to that
drum!

League on league, from sea to sea,
Lie the rotting frames of men;
League on league but burnt rafters
Mark the homes where love was
then;
Broken cannon, shattered entrench-
ments,
Ruined fields and shot-torn woods,
Blood-dyed streams and gaping
hedges
Over which stern Memory broods;—

Lo! the glory of the battle!
—A woman's hair,—a child's
rattle;—
And, crushed amid his meek milch
cattle,
A peasant nigh his hut of wattle!—
Woe me! The reaping of their
dream!

THE KAISER'S DREAM.

(Sept.—1916.)

Where should a Caesar bear his
 sway,
Save where, by its winding pathway,
The golden Tiber seeks the sea?
Save where, by Naples' bay of blue,
With tresses dark—the raven's
 hue,—
The laughing maidens in wild glee
E'er dance, and glance through
 lashes long,
Or sing at eve Santa Lucia's song?

Let my footsteps but lead to Rome,
And 'neath Saint Peter's arching
 dome,
I'll rear a throne
Of Empire that for all my toil,
War's tumult, horror, grimy moil,
E'en Verdun's futile bloodshed shall
 atone!

THE DAWN OF FREEDOM.

(March—1917.)

Great Ragnarök indeed was come:
From Pole to Pole thundered the
 drum;
Cathay and Ind their broad war-
 banners fly;

All Peoples moved their armies forth
At battle's call;—no more was mirth
In any land;—none heard the
widows' and the orphans' cry.

Then lo! The Dawn of Freedom
breaks!
Across the wide Slavic plain shakes
The retreating banner of age-
crowned Might;
The kings tremble, as their high
thrones,—
Once set on skulls and rotting
bones,—
Topple, and their glory dies into
night.

The right of lords to grind the
serf?—
'Tis gone! And no more the green
turf
Is reddened by the despairing
patriot's blood;
Against the foe, whose German boast
Claimed earth as campus for their
host,
Free men now pour,—a martial
flood.

THE MEN OF 1917.

(May-1917.)

His fathers wore the blue,
He wears the khaki-brown;
They knew the freedom of the seas,
the woods,—
He but the streets of paved town;
And yet, on History's high roll, his
fame
Will march with grandsire's storied
name:

Theirs the rude courage from out-
door life,
Where contest with the moods of
Nature gave them strength
To meet all stress;—his that of the
cultured brain,
That taught, dares any length,
Or height, or depth, that leads last
To the desired goal, when the toil is
past:

Each to his country's need freely
gave all;
Nor held him back from anything
Whereby his Nation should grow
great,
And that to his sons should liberty
bring;
Nor cared he for self, whether the
tossing sea
Or whispers 'mid the pines should
his requiem be.

MARCH AWAY.

(July-1917.)

March away! March away!
Eager, longing for the fray,—
Longing for the coming day
When against the German might
Storm our legions for the Right.

Ah! German Rhine! Thy waters
yet
Shall run with blood; nor e'er forget,
Though long thy sons weep with
regret,
That each corse sowed in Belgic field
Did hundred-fold of harvest yield.

March away! March away!
Though your hair turn to gray;
Freedom heard you cry "Aye!"
When she called against the Hun
Men fearing nought 'neath the sun.

O'er Prussian plain your banners fly;
Let Hartz echo the defeated's sigh;
Hohenzollern's black eagle die
When o'er Black Forest's shaded
gloom
Our banner crowns its Empire's
tomb.

March away! March away!
Come back garlanded with the bay;
Come you as come you may,—
Still our hearts long for you
'Neath the stars and falling dew.

THE CHARIOTS OF THE AIR.

(Aug.-1917.)

Bold was the man who first would
drive
The chariot of Apollo,
But bolder yet the men who strive
For the eagle as their fellow;
That, soaring far above the world,
Beyond the thunder-riven cloud,
They'd battle there in tempest
whirled,
Where none could hear their cannon
loud.
Buried far in the depths of space,
Beyond all straining human eyes,
They dash, they soar, they upward
race,
Far swifter than the condor flies;
Till, hurtling down, a thing of flame,
A darting flash of death and hate,
'Neath crumpled wings and twisted
frame
Lies the corse of him who met his
fate,
While, high above the eagle, flies
Its engine's roar its battle cry,
The victor's chariot onward hies
To seek a foe hid in the sky.

WAKE!

(Aug.-1917)

Sons of your fathers! Wake! The
dawn is nigh!
A glory in the heavens shake your
banner high!
High o'er the nations, a shield for
the free,
Menace of fate for those who hate
democracy,
Symbol of peace to those who cease
from strife,
Symbol of hope for those who
grope amid the dust of life,
Star-studded blue, the sky's own
hue, its field uprear,
Snowy bars, blood-dyed scars encircle
near;
Then high, high, rear it high! to
all a sign,,
Set foremost in the world's great
battle line,
That ye are sons of those who shed
their blood
To stem the war-borne tide of
slavery's cruel flood.

THE REFUGE.

(Sept.—1917.)

Within the shadow of the flag they
rest secure,
Your mother dear, your sister sweet,
your sweetheart pure;
No foul German beast, no vile wolf-
ish, grinning Hun,
Shall e'er affright those sheltered
'neath its folds outflung!

The Belgic fields are trampled down,
and red with mire,—
Mire of human clay! all that bomb
and Hun-set fire
Can do is done; trembling, weeping,
through the ruins stalk
The shades of those who once the
village street were wont to walk:

Raped, and tortured, starved and
beaten, as their oppressors will;
Broken, sodden, past entreating, en-
vyng those they kill;
So the ghosts of maidens pass,
where upon their village green
Olden sunsets brought fair lasses
dancing o'er the scene!

In far lands our flag has flown, it's
waved in many a breeze,
It's soard above the crested snow,
it's rippled 'neath the cocoa
trees;
But never since it broke the bands
that bound the Afric slave,
Has it sheltered aught beneath its
folds save the freedom that God
gave!

Then spread its sheltering folds
broad, a shield above fair
France,
A message of hope to Belgic eyes,—
the pennon of God's lance,—
The lance that yet shall strike to
earth the demon with his
crown.
The flag whose glories yet shall fill
the world with its renown.

Beneath its folds all nations shall be
one and free;
Nor any race, nor creed, know aught
but liberty;
There none shall domineer, there
none shall bow as slave;
Its folds shall be each woman's
glory, its stars all men crave!

"SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE."

(Nov.-1917.)

"Somewhere in France!" in death's
cold trance,
He sleeps the soldier's long, last
sleep;
And o'er that mound-strewn battle
ground,
Dee weeps,—while the green ivies
creep
To lay their garlands on his grave,
That final bivouac of the brave,—
"Somewhere in France!" "Some-
where in France!"

By Ancre, Somme, or grim Verdun,
On Ypres' plain, or Vimy's hill,
Where, though cannon crushed and
bayonet thrust,
Britain's banner flies proudly still,
There "over the top" our Yanks
they go,—
Because their bold hearts will it so,
"Somewhere in France!" "Some-
where in France!"

God speed the day that sees our flag,
Though battle-torn to but a rag,
Lead o'er the crest, on to the Rhine,
Through storm of shell and bullet
whine,
Our own brave men,—that when
they fall
They'll hear above them their own
bugle call!—
"Somewhere in France!" "Some-
where in France!"

FRANCE-BOUND.

(Feb.-1918.)

Thou, my birth-land,—fast-fading
land,

That in my dreams I'll see;

Thou fair land where my longing
heart

Will ever, ever be;

My birth-land, my home-land,

Land by the blue lake's lea;

My birth-land, my home land,

Shall I thee ever see?

Thou far-off land, thou dear dream-
land,

Land of the heart's delight,

Thou land which fond memory's sun

Forevermore makes bright;

Land where I, with heart free

From all of cark and care,

Unknowing weariness

Dreamed love immortal there.

Ah, thou fond land! O thou loved
land!

Land where with friends I'd roam,

Through that fair land, ever-blest
land,

My own beloved home;

Where never was harshness,

Nor man made man to moan,

Where dreaming nought evil

I reaped the joy I'd sown:

Thou, my home-land, ever dear
land,
Land where my loved ones dwell;
O my home-land! O my fond-land!
'Twixt us the long leagues swell!
In that far land, loved land,
There would I ever be,
Yet my eyes may but thee
Through love's memory see!

Till that great day at last shall
come,
That brings us to our own,
When all who loved again shall
greet,
Nor find, then, olden grown,
Those they loved upon earth,
Those whose fond lips they've
known,
The souls, the scenes, their starry
flag
By Heaven's own breezes blown:

And till that day we'll fight the fight,
That man must fight to win,
To gain for self, and for his race,
Triumph o'er Death and Sin;
To put the Right above the Wrong,
Help the fallen, raise up the weak,
With the pure crush the foul,—
Be brave, be just, be meek!

FROM SHANNON'S SIDE.

From wide Shannon and from fair
Clyde,
From by the Foyle and storm-vexed
Moyle,
From winding Swilly's land-locked
side,
From all of Erin's grey-blue loughs,
From Mask and Corrib and Lough
Ree,
From Derg and Erne and far Lough
Veagh,
From where Killarney's mild blue
wave
Its castled ruins reflect and lave,
From where 'neath Corkonian
boughs
Lee hears the bells of Shandon toll,
From all her isles in all her seas
Eirne's hero-sons greet the battle-
breeze!

Their dead they cover Vimy's ridge,
They clog the trenches in Flemish
fields,
They've crossed the Somme by pon-
toon bridge,
They've made their bodies living
shields,
Their hundred thousands heard the
call
As did the men of Fontenoy,
And gay and free up-answered all,
Not one who lagged, to honor coy,
But bold they hurtle on the foe,—
For France had called!—and they
must go!

FRANCE.

(May-1918.)

O thou bleeding heart of France
Take new courage through the night,
On your clustered standards glance
The first rays of coming light;
Dark the storm and drear the night,
Lashing, crashing, fell the iron hail;
Raged the demons in their might,
Rose on high the women's wail;
Slaughtered babes lay in your
streets,
Grandsires hoary in their blood,
Fire fell from heaven in blazing
sheets,
Gas poured its death-whelming
flood;
Yet through all true to yourself,
True to your heroic past,
Recking not of life or pelf,
Staking all on one bold cast,
So you stood firm at Verdun,
As you'd turned them at the Marne,
To your battered ramparts clung,
Heaped the Huns a battle-cairn;
Now, O France, our legions come,
As thine came once to our aid,
And through gas and crashing bomb
Dash our manhood, unafraid;
Ours now let the burden be,
On us now let it be laid,
We who first knew Liberty
Ours the task of Orlean's Maid!

THE HUNS.

(May—1918.)

Stark, against the reeling sky they
stand;
Fierce-eyed, grimy, spectres of the
deep;—
The Deep of Hell! Lowest of the
Pit!
Beasts whom e'en Satan could not
endure!
They pour their torrent across the
Flemish land,
They leave behind but ruins where
women weep,
They desecrate the church with ob-
scene wit,
They torture and they ravish, within
their might secure!
Lo! Ruin marks their pathway!
Lo! Terror runs before!
The shadow of their ranks of gray
Casts its horror on each cottage
door!
No grain grows in the fields they
pass,
No fruits on any bough,
Shattered walls rise amid the
grass,—
Filth-fouled altars where no knee
may bow!

THE GOAL OF DESIRE.

(Aug.—1918.)

They sing as they enter the trenches,
They sing in the zone of fire,
They sing as they storm from the
trenches,—
For they have reached the goal of
desire,—

The goal of their high, fond desire,
The goal to which their hearts proud
aspire;—
Their hearts which no marching
could tire,—
That goal—the baptism of fire!

Singing their brown lines go for-
ward;
And there the Huns' rush is stayed;
Singing they drive up the long
slopes
Till the Black Eagle in dust is laid:

Yea, Prussia's Black Eagle is trail-
ing,
Trailing in the mud of the Marne,
And the dead of their hosts is
heaping
A greater than Aix's battle-cairn!

But the boys who passed down our
streets,
Smiling with May and the morn—
They are the ones who now singing
Have smitten the Prussian to scorn:

And the goal of their fond desire
They have gained through sleet and
storm,
As through the hells of gas and
liquid fire
They dash to guard France the For-
lorn.

WISCONSIN'S HEROES.

(Sept.—1918.)

On the slope of a wood in France
they lie—
Face to the sky, face to the sky,
The winds blowing over them softly
sigh,—
“Not in vain they die!” “Not in
vain they die!”
“These young heroes who came
across the sea,
From the Land of the Free! From
the Land of the Free!
To battle for France and world-lib-
erty,
Heroicly! Heroicly!”

Through all years to come will their
faces shine,
In glory sublime, in glory sublime;
And wreaths immortal forever will
twine,
In Heaven's clime, in Heaven's
clime,
O'er their brows that the great sac-
rifice have made,—
Who their lives have laid, who their
lives have laid,
A free-will offering on Freedom's
shrine,—
To the end of Time, to the end of
Time.

The grief from our hearts it will
pass away,—
With the seasons' sway, with the
seasons' sway;
But their glory shall ne'er dim or
decay,—
In our hearts always, in our hearts
always;
But shall clearer shine as the years
go by,—
The years that try, the years that
try;
And their faces will greet us bye
and bye,
When the end is nigh, when the end
is nigh.

VICTORY'S PRICE.

(Sept.—1918.)

Ah, it's glorious to see the flag advance

Where the death-driven devils of
battle dance;

Ah, it's glorious to hear the victor's
cry

Where the Prussian lies prone
neath the flame-riven sky;—

But my laughing boy—he will
come ne'er more

From the shell-riven hell of far-
away France!

Ah, it's great to hear the high bu-
gles crying

When the broken foe in wild ter-
ror's flying;

Ah, it's great to see hope and joy re-
light

As through the vales of France goes
our banner bright;

But my laughing boy—he will
evermore

On the flame-stricken slope in
France be lying!

Ah, it's proud I am that in carven
brass,
With the tattered ensigns glowing
beneath the glass,
That his name will stand with his
comrades true
'Neath the Capitol's dome all the
centuries through;—
But my laughing boy,—he will
come ne'er more
With the flowers of spring and
the swift-greening grass!

Ah, my heart will fly at each mo-
ment's chance,
When e'er through the window I
may eastward glance,
To a wooded slope where machine-
guns flame,
Where the Sons of Wisconsin carved
their "Terrible" name;—
For my laughing boy,—he will lie
e'er more
On that blood-soaked field in far-
distant France!

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